

### Frequently Asked Questions

If you have questions about our office or the services provided, you may find the answers here. Click a question to view the answer. If your answer is not found here, feel free to email this office at [linda.hash@nc.nacdnet.net](mailto:linda.hash@nc.nacdnet.net), call this office at 336-372-4645, or drop by our office at 90 South Main St. Room 200, County Office Building, Sparta NC.

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### **What kind of assistance can I get through the Soil and Water Conservation District?**

Technical assistance is available at no cost for various resource concerns: (erosion control, vegetative establishment, water quality concerns, animal waste plans, etc.) In some cases you may also qualify for financial assistance to correct some of these concerns. To learn more about cost-share assistance see the next question.

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### **What kind of cost-share programs are available for farmers?**

Both State and Federal Programs are available to help farmers install Best Management Practices to address environmental concerns. You may call the local Soil and Water Conservation Office at 336-372-4645 or visit the State and Federal websites to receive more information about the programs. The following website is the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service Programs website: [www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/) the program currently being funded in Alleghany County is the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The following website tells about the NC Agricultural Cost Share Program:

[www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC/pages/agcostshareprogram.html](http://www.enr.state.nc.us/DSWC/pages/agcostshareprogram.html)

Another State Program that assists in restoring wetlands and streambank stabilization is the NC Wetlands Restoration Program:

[h2o.enr.state.nc.us/wrp/index.htm](http://h2o.enr.state.nc.us/wrp/index.htm)

(To see a local project, click on "Projects", from the map-click on "Alleghany County").

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### **How can I get a copy of the Alleghany County Soil Survey?**

Copies of the published Soil Survey for Alleghany County have been nearly depleted. You may access the soils maps through the Alleghany E911 Mapping webpage at: [www.webgis.net/scripts/esrimap.dll](http://www.webgis.net/scripts/esrimap.dll) or request individual sheets of the maps for a particular area and non-technical descriptions by contacting our office at 336-372-4645 or by email:

[linda-hash@nc.nacdnet.org](mailto:linda-hash@nc.nacdnet.org)

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### **What environmental educational programs are available?**

The following educational programs are available through the Alleghany Soil and Water Conservation District:

- *Educational Contests*: Contests are offered through local schools in the categories of: 5th Grade Poster, 6th Grade Essay, 7th and 8th Grade Speech. These competitions are held at school, county, area, and state levels.
- *Resource Conservation Workshop*: Two or more high school students are sponsored to attend NC State University for one week in June for classes and college orientation, with field trips in the study of natural resources.
- *Down to Earth Teacher Workshop*: This workshop is offered each summer to teachers and other environmental educators, focusing on environmental concerns and solutions. Renewal credits may be earned.
- *Area, State, and National Envirothon Competitions*: The District sponsors this Environmental Educational event in which middle and high school teams attend outdoor stations and compete in the fields of soils, aquatics, wildlife, forestry, and current environmental issues.
- *Soil and Water Stewardship Week*: The district provides materials to local churches, libraries, and organizations for promoting stewardship of our earth.

Scout programs, Day Camp, Agricultural Fairs and Environmental Field Days: Programs are provided upon request.

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### **Can your agency force my neighbor to correct an erosion problem on his land?**

We are not a regulatory agency, so we can not force anyone to correct a problem. If the landowner requests our assistance we can provide technical assistance in correcting an erosion problem. If the landowner does not want to correct the problem you may call the regulatory agency in Winston-Salem, NC. The Water Quality and Land Quality offices may be reached through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) at 336-771-4600.

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### **Are cattle operation required to fence the animals out of the streams?**

Currently there is no law in Alleghany County requiring animals to be fenced out of the streams. If your operation is reported to the Water Quality Regulatory Division and found to be creating a water quality problem, you may then be required to keep the animals out of the

stream. Also, in order to qualify for financial assistance through various cost-share programs, you may be required to exclude your cattle from the streams.

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### **What is the Farmland Preservation Program and how do I qualify for?**

The purpose of the Voluntary Farmland Preservation Program is to encourage the voluntary preservation and protection of farmland from non-farm development. This is in recognition of the importance of agriculture to the economic and social life of the county. To qualify for the voluntary program the farm must be participating in or qualify for the farm PRESENT-USE-VALUE taxation program. The primary qualifications for this taxation program are as follows: Individually owned agricultural land consisting of at least ten (10) acres, that has produced an average annual income of one thousand (\$1000) over a three-year period, or individually owned horticultural land, consisting of at least five (5) acres, producing an average income of one thousand dollars (\$1000) per year, or individually owned forest land consisting of at least 20 acres that are in actual production and not included in a farm unit. To apply or for more information, contact our office at 336-372-4645.

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### **Who do I call if there is an environmental emergency?**

You may report an environmental emergency to the NC Division of Water Quality (DWQ) at 1-800-858-0368.

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